Rating:	Not Rated
Archive Warning:	Choose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Grand Theft Auto V
Relationship:	Michael De Santa/Trevor Philips
Character:	Michael De Santa, Trevor Philips
Additional Tags:	pre-ludendorff, Homophobia, One-Shot, Violence, Swearing
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2017-06-09 Words: 3961

motel ice machine

by orphan_account

Summary

‘What? Something funny about this, sugar?’ Trevor says, as if he’d been waiting, patrolling Michael’s behaviour for derision, indifference even.

‘No, I’m just thinking about what a bundle of fucking joy you are.’

Notes

See the end of the work for notes

The spade in the machine is cracked, slipping out under the weight of ice-chunks every time he tries to lift them out. On the third attempt Michael throws it to the ground, kicking it at the pathetic set of vending machines selling off-brand cola and candy bars. Impulsively, seized by panic he plunges his hands wrist-deep and claws out what he can hold on to, spilling it on the t-shirt laid out between his feet.

‘Fuck! Come on you fuckin’ useless piece of shit!’ he snaps, down on his hands and knees collecting the ice chips that scattered when they hit the concrete. With an impatient growl he goes back and digs his arm in up to the elbows, cradling out as much as possible, the front of his t-shirt getting soaked in the process. Hands shaking in the North Dakota autumn he sets his teeth at a clench and folds the shirt over the ice - lifting it up like an old cartoon villain stealing sack of gold. God, he must look like a fucking maniac, shirt dribbled with blood and diluted with water, the fabric in his hand taut dripping, swinging wildly at his side as he jogs back down the corridor to the first floor room. Usually they take the second or third floor in case they need more escape routes, but Trevor hadn’t been able to handle the stairs.

Michael skids to a stop at the doorway, collecting his thoughts and breath. His hands are shaking and he can’t tell if it’s from the cold or if some insidious fear is crawling under his skin. He shoulders his way through the unlocked door and practically slides into the bathroom, a few pieces

of ice falling out of the make-shift carrier and disappearing behind the toilet bowel. When he looks at Trevor it's like he sees him again for the first time since finding him behind the dumpster. He looks broke, crushed; laid out in the tub in all his clothes, head lolling to the side, eyes scrunched shut in pain. His breath hitches and rolls, breaks and bouts; chest spiking and then hollowing out. Michael flinches when he coughs, gingerly empties out the t-shirt at his feet. The ice clatters into the hollow of the yellow-stained tub.

'T, you gotta stay awake, come on, man,' Michael says, laying a hand on one boney knee and looking up at him.

'I don't—don't put me on ice, M,' Trevor says, 'It ain't that bad.'

Michael studies him with a frown and ghosts a hand across his chin while he studies him; the bruises are already creeping up his neck, body awkwardly inclined to the left to avoid putting pressure on the worse half of his injuries. He shakes his head more for his own benefit than Trevor's. 'If you ever wanna leave this room in one piece you'll suck it up.'

He reaches in and starts unlacing Trevor's boots, working quickly without disturbing his prone torso.

'You stripping me, Mikey?' Trevor asks, eyeing him and tilting his head up against the back of the tub.

'This would be a hell of a lot easier if you shut up,' Michael says evenly, catching a low snicker that turns into a hiss of pain.

'In case you haven't noticed I don't do *easy*, alright.'

Michael snorts, moving up and gingerly slipping his hands under Trevor's jacket on his shoulders, hands deft as he skates it off. Trevor whines with pain as the fabric comes loose and lays back in a Grateful Dead t-shirt filled with holes toward the hem. Michael takes a deep breath and looks into his eyes in preparation for lifting the shirt.

'This'll hurt.'

Trevor hitches a shallow breath and nods once, 'Always does,' he murmurs, eyes locking into Michael's for a long-standing second. His gaze is hooded and dark, Michael dodges his eyes and looks at his own shaking hands instead, trying to focus on taking his shirt of as quickly and gently as possible. Trevor white-knuckles the sides of the tub and clenches his teeth hard, screwing his eyes shut to game himself. It reminds Michael of the magic trick that involves whipping away a table cloth with no effect on the set plates and candlestick except a brief tremble at the end.

'You know I can just cut it off you.'

'The fuck you will, this is my favourite shirt.'

'Right, course,' Michael rolls his eyes, and pulls the hem up, trying to ignore the broken sound that kicks out from the depth of Trevor's chest when he lifts his arms to let the fabric over.

When Trevor finally sits naked in the tub he starts shaking violently. Michael looks him over; body a medley of pinks of blossoming into purple, in particular under his ribs. There's hardly any cuts, but there's no unmarked flesh, all of it turned under fists and boots. Michael presses the heel of his hand into his eye, exhales.

'Are you fucking sure this'll work?' Trevor asks, hands tensing on the edge with the effort of

talking. ‘Cause brother if this one of tho-’

‘It worked every time I got beat up playing ball,’ Michael throws him a quick look as he turns the cold water tap all the way, plugs the drain. The water leaks out brown at first and then goes clear. The hair on Trevor’s arms stands on end when it starts to pool around him.

‘Oh yeah Mr. NFL? If it worked so w-well why the hell are you sitting here with me instead of sucking champagne out of some west coast cheerleader’s p-pussy?’ Trevor’s teeth clatter on the delivery, but there’s still bite in his words. A challenge.

Michael wipes a hand across his mouth, he doesn’t rise to it, pushes down the flare of anger, ‘I’m gonna get more ice. Take your pants off.’

‘What?’ Trevor looks up, eyes flickering as if his three seconds from falling unconscious. ‘Last thing I need is a popsicle-dick.’

But by the time his out the door he hears the metal of a belt buckle hit the wall of the tub. Out by the foot of his bed, Michael unzips his backpack and tips the contents out. His gun, a rubber-banded ball of cash, some clean underwear, a spare pack of cigarettes and the Instax Trevor gave him last year come tumbling out.

‘Shit,’ he swears under his breath, scooping up the camera and putting it on the bed with the lens facing up, before he rushes out again.

Even armed with his pack for ice-transport purposes it takes five more trips before the tub is brimming and Trevor is submerged up to his neck.

‘Ah fuck. M, I can’t feel shit. Can’t tell if I’m f-freezing or burning,’ he says as Michael finally towels dry a spot next to the tub and takes a seat. It’s shallow motel tub, the grimy curtains pulled all the way back and the sink sitting above his head to this left. The tiles are alternatively a horrendous light brown and a garish yellow. Trevor’s hand hangs out over the side, three inches from where Michael rests his elbow as he lights a cigarette.

Trevor watches him intently as he blows out the first plumes of smoke and tilts his head back, heart rate declining for the first time in a couple of hours. Michael chuckles wearily, he’d been on coke trips that have poured less adrenaline into his bloodstream.

‘What? Something funny about this, sugar?’ Trevor says, as if he’d been waiting, patrolling Michael’s behaviour for derision, indifference even.

‘No, I’m just thinking about what a bundle of fucking joy you are.’

‘What so now I’m a fucking baby you’re just towing around, huh?’ Trevor snaps, hand emerging more and beginning to hoist himself out of the water.

Michael get’s a firm hand on his shoulder before the situation escalates, ‘Jesus T, don’t be such a quick fucking comeback. I didn’t mean it like that.’ He rolls his neck reflexively when Trevor settles back down in his seat.

‘Well the fuck *did* you mean? Because you’re the—’ Trevor catches himself mid-sentence.

In all the three years they’ve known each other, Michael has never seen Trevor swallow his words - as ill-fated as the outcome has been for them; they’ve committed murder and larceny at the mercy of Trevor’s tongue before. Now, lying naked in a tub of ice bruised so black and blue, Michael can’t fathom why he would shut up. He drags on his cigarette, giving Trevor’s impulsive nature a

chance to oust itself.

A couple of minutes string by, but Trevor has leaned back and begun inspecting the mildewed ceiling. He looks like his deep in thought, Michael's on edge biting his cuticles.

'Because what?' he finally snaps.

'Huh?' Trevor plays dumb.

'Say what you were gonna say,' Michael stubs his cigarettes on the tiles, slips the butt down the drain. Trevor growls impatiently, eyes dark under the shitty florescent light, hair pushed back from his forehead. It's always growing out too quickly. A week hasn't gone by since Michael slumped him into chair and did his best hairdresser impression.

I ain't gonna offer up a murder weapon and throat to some jackass I don't know, Trevor had said before melodramatically pressing the handle of a silver pair of scissors into his palm.

'You're the reason they fucked me up,' Trevor murmurs.

Michael snorts, 'Sure, bro, blame *me* for getting into a fight with a gang of junkies—what was it this time? Was it cause I picked the bar? Or cause I planned last night's heist which landed us in this town?' he stands up before his certain why. 'You know, T I'm getting really fuckin' sick and tired of bearing your goddamn crosses. Why don't you just own the fuck up to the irresponsible shit you get up to and stop throwing your shit at me, you immature, fucking piece of shit!'

He's livid, heart strumming back to what it had been. Nearly ten hours ago he'd come out of a bar, arm in arm with a gorgeous girl. Except they had passed the alleyway where the kitchen got it's deliveries and put out it's rubbish and he'd heard a tinny voice calling his name. Trevor was crumpled into a ball behind a green industrial sized bin, covered in dirt and barely moving.

'Go, get outta here,' Michael had snapped at the girl without one more look at her. She'd sworn at him some typical things midwestern girls call their guys and ran off.

Michael had logically known Trevor had to be alive if he called his name, but the ten seconds it took him to reach him had been the longest of his life. Staring at him motionless on the concrete, face pressed to the floor for the mercy of it's coolness, Michael had been wracked with thought of Trevor's head lolling when he tried to wake him up, Trevor life-less and grey, Trevor's eyes glassy and open and dead.

Not this time, Trevor had looked at him and hissed when Michael tried to help him up. When he got him into the car he hadn't said a word all the way to the motel, half-carrying Trevor and gritting his teeth at the swallowed screams next to his ear when they arrived.

Now Trevor sits bruised and berated in the tub. He looks up at Michael with hooded eyes, knowingly.

What does he know? What more is there to this story? Nothing, *that's what*, Michael thinks with vengeance. Nothing else to it. Two years in and Michael anticipates leaving another bar in another city one day and that time they won't be so lucky; Trevor will be dead, he will be alone, and there will be *nothing* else to this goddamn story. Barely two years in each other's company and that'll be the end of this fucking, miserable story. Just another chapter rounding out the prequel of an unwanted trailer kid, an aborted college football dream and one-bit criminal with nothing to show for the blood on his hands, but a dead partner.

'It wasn't junkies,' Trevor says, oddly calm.

‘Like FUCK it wasn’t! But you know what Trev - it’s fine - it *was* my fucking fault. And I’ll be the one who’ll have to scrape you off the fucking pavement one day, and buy you a goddamn suit and bury you out back of some piss poor podunk town. ME!’

He kicks the side of the tub, the ice-water sloshing around, lapping up Trevor’s neck.

A heavy silence presses down on them, Michael staring into his eyes and Trevor staring right back. The foot he kicked out aches dully. His nails bite into his palms from fists he doesn’t remember clenching.

‘Well, I’m fucking ecstatic you’ve got it all planned out, M,’ Trevor hisses, ‘You got a plot of land ready somewhere? I’ll amend my will so your greedy cunt ass won’t have to pay a penny.’

Like an elastic band stretched across the past three minutes Michael catches up to himself. He feels sick with regret. Having said things that in retrospect are the opposite of what he means. But he ain’t ever been one for apologies.

‘I need more cigarettes,’ he says hollowly, and leaves, snapping the bathroom door shut behind him. Michael grabs his coat from the floor on the way out, the cold air hitting him hard.

He walks around the motel a few times, finishes the pack of cigarettes he started in the bathroom. Michael thinks about the world now withered and closed to him. Not that it ever was open, but now…now it’s like the entire world has shrunk to the size of the midwest, population 2. No family, nobody but a scraggly kid six months younger than himself in his life. The only constant; a constant that was chasing drugs and taking undue risks every second day. Trevor’s dying wasn’t exactly unlikely at the rate he was going, escalating.

And if *he* dies? Well, Trevor will probably skip town before the coroner shuts Michael’s eyes one last time. Times like this he just wants somewhere he can go back to, a bed that’s made, people who are *obligated* to bury him, mourn and remember him once his six feet under.

For now, if Trevor calls him brother it’s an affectionate whim, not a promise. If he warms his bed at night, Michael can’t let it mean more than a stripper doing the same. After all, there’s still money involved, their partnership is money everything else is just…a bi-product. Trevor is just a selfish kid fulfilling whatever idea kicks into his head, Michael can’t be a fool about that. It’s all the same to Trevor; the drugs and alcohol, quick cash-grabs from Texacos…letting Michael fuck him. Trevor is a string of impulses it’s useless to attach meaning to. But fuck if Michael hasn’t already made that mistake.

He toes the hard earth under his feet, the sun well and truly rising by now. A familiar exhaustion enters his body at last, and he turns back to the room.

Inside it’s warmer with the radiator on high and the curtains drawn. After his eyes adjust he makes out Trevor on the bed; wearing a borrowed black sweater and his grey track-pants. Michael dimly notices that there are a couple of blotches of blood down his own front. When he clicks the door shut behind him Trevor opens his eyes and regards him. His got dark rings around his eyes, propped up on three pillows with his hands laid out at his sides.

‘You know you don’t have to stay, M,’ Trevor says, ‘You can pack your shit and leave any time you goddamn want.’

‘Shut up,’ he says tiredly, going over to his own bed and taking a seat. He starts to take off his boots, stopping when he hears Trevor gasp in pain. Michael looks up at him; worrying his lower lip

between his teeth, hands clutched in the sheets.

‘Did you at least get something for your trouble?’ Michael asks, putting his feet up on the bed beside the camera.

‘What?’

‘You know - meth or weed - somethin’ to take your mind of the pain,’ Michael waves vaguely.

Trevor shakes his head. ‘I know you won’t get it through your thick fucking skull, but - it wasn’t *about* drugs.’

Michael considers what his being told. Instinct writes it of as another lie. But the more he turns it over the less it makes sense - Trevor jumps at the chance to smoke, snort or inhale whatever comes his way normally - let alone now. Besides, what these two years have taught him is if Trevor is anything it ain’t a liar. A wave of guilt crashes over his head at the realisation.

‘Alright, T, what the fuck are you talking about?’ Michael asks, sitting up and turning to face him.

Trevor looks away, stares intently at the wall adjacent to the beds; there’s busted tv on a runty tray and a closet full of god knows what that they won’t touch during their short stay here. Trevor shuts his eyes.

Just when Michael thinks his fallen asleep and considers prompting him again, he says, ‘It was you, you dumb, fuck - how you stopped me on the way to the can last night.’

Michael rubs his neck, remembering all the details that caught in him like shrapnel the previous night. He’d put away four fingers of whiskey by that point, the lights pulsing a gentle red when Trevor mentioned he was gonna take a leak. Caught off guard by the wet glint of beer on his lips and the way he stretched as he got off the barstool Michael followed him, heavy, slack-jawed and drawn after him by impulse.

‘Hey,’ Michael had caught him by the elbow in the corridor that led to the bathroom. He had pulled him along into an alcove that shot off to the left, a glitch in architecture, hidden and half in shadow. Michael had curled two fists into the front of Trevor shirt, sending the empty beer bottles littering the hallway rolling away with a glassy ring. Michael could smell Trevor’s sweat, the Pisswaser he’d been drinking, he had seen the flecks of salt on his lips from the pretzels they’d been eating all night.

‘Hey, yourself,’ Trevor had grinned wolfishly, but didn’t move until Michael clutched him closer and ran a tongue over his bottom lip, tasting salt and *him* soft, still smirking. Loose and tipsy with liquor sloshing in his ears Michael let Trevor burrow into his neck flatten his tongue against his pulse and dipping into the point between his collarbones. He had pulled him close with two hands in his hair, forced his mouth onto his own, tonguing it open, tilting his head so he could take his lower lip between his teeth. Two days stubble for Michael, three for Trevor, like sparking live wires when their chins collided, forcing a growl from Trevor and his hips to slot into place.

At some point Michael had swung them around, and left Trevor before he made him come pressed up against that wall, opting to go back to the bar without a look back. He ordered another drink to make the time go while he waited to for Trevor to come back and skip the joint with him.

Except he never did. Ten, fifteen and then thirty minutes had gone by while Michael sat impatiently at the bar, one drink becoming four. Eventually he checked the bathroom, but no Trevor, just a back door left ajar; sweeping a cold wind into the corridor that’d been warm before.

Michael had made a beeline for the first girl that looked at him, forced himself to forget whatever the hell he had planned.

Now on the ratty covers he swallows hard, head pounding when it dawns on him.

‘Usual shit - fag this and homo that, maybe five of them. I think I slashed a couple of them before they got my knife of me, pretty sure they carried one sack of shit away when they ran.’

‘Who were they?’ Michael asks quietly.

‘Tough guy types. Fuck, I don’t know Mikey, just run of the mill midwest cunts that hang around these parts, dickless, brainless meathea—’ Trevor swallows the word, wincing and lowering a hand to cover his stomach. ‘Can I bum a cigarette?’

Michael snatches his back-up packet from the floor, taking out his lighter on the way to the other bed. He sits at the edge and puts it between Trevor’s lips, holding his eyes steady.

‘You remember their faces, T? They were probably regulars, they’d be back tonight,’ Michael says, holding up the lighter and sparking it until he get’s a steady flame.

Trevor doesn’t answer, he takes a drag, chuckles lightly. ‘What? You gonna go back and ask for matching bruises, sugar? Great fucking idea.’

Michael rubs a hand over his mouth, rolling his shoulders. He glares at the bruises that bloom up to Trevor’s collarbones, evidence of hard kicks aimed to burn and mar flesh. Thoughtlessly he raises a hand, touches the bare skin above his sweater with his fingertips. ‘No baby, I’d go back and put bullets between their eyes.’

When Michael looks up he finds his eyes already trained on him, ‘Yeah well, town’s still hot from the robbery and you can’t bury bodies for shit.’

His eyes are half-lidded with exhaustion, but there’s a slant to his lips. Michael leans forward and kisses him, cupping his jaw in one hand, a searing, sweet pain ratcheting up in his chest when Trevor’s leans into it. When Trevor’s mouth falls open with a gasp that Michael could never forget, he softly threads his fingers through his hair with his other hand and pulls away.

‘I’m gonna go get some Tylenol, dinner,’ he says, pressing his forehead against Trevor’s, tucking the hair at his temple behind his ear. The rage he feels nearly engulfs what he says next. ‘Try and get some sleep.’

A moment of swallowed silence goes by, Trevor ghosts the backs of two fingers under Michael’s chin; something that feels close to adoration.

Trevor hums, 'Too bad I froze my dick of back there or I’d ask you to stay and keep me warm.’

Michael shakes his head, smirking at him as he stands up. Trevor lies down further on the pillows, eyes shut, brow slightly creased.

Before leaving Michael tucks his gun into the back of his pant, pats his jean pocket to make sure his got his keys and his wallet. He ties tight knots in his boots and begins toward the door, but not before stopping momentarily, ‘T, I’m sorry I wasn’t…I wasn’t fucking thinking.’

‘What? You mean in the bar, or in there,’ Trevor says, motioning toward the bathroom door vaguely.

Michael doesn’t say anything, he doesn’t know.

‘Whatever you say, Mikey. Don’t force my dead ass into a suit,’ Trevor snorts, shaking his head against the pillow.

Michael startles himself when he laughs. ‘No, for you - I’d swing for a tux.’

Trevor moves on the bed, turning away from him with a groan. Michael starts to close the door behind him just as Trevor says, 'Burn me Mikey, I don’t wanna be fucking buried.’

With the door finally shut behind him, Michael stands on the welcome matt and feels like Trevor dug his hands into his chest and scooped everything out. Part of him wants to get into the rusty shit-can they jacked last month and never look back. The other part of him steadies his hands and checks the magazine for bullets.

End Notes

Can I say that five minutes of one Fargo FX ep is responsible for this fic?

Alright, alright, alright, I'm a comment-hungry gremlin please let me know what you thought. Thanks for reading!

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!